

We realized something very important over this weekend, which is that we are in charge here and we have the power, if we wish to exercise it, to change a bit the culture of the House. Many terrific ideas came out of the weekend, very practical, very much able to be implemented with the goodwill and support of the leadership on both sides which happily were in attendance for the weekend.

We will be meeting again, the organizing committee and the coleader teams tomorrow, to start to work on keeping the momentum going forward in the effort that was begun this weekend. I thank the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LAHOOD]; I thank all of my colleagues, both Democratic and Republican, for the spirit with which they approached this undertaking, and we are deeply in the debt of the Pew Charitable Trusts for their support in underwriting this experiment in making the democracy work better.

#### GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER IN HERSHEY

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I too spent the weekend with my family at Hershey, PA. I want to congratulate the Members on both sides of the aisle that put the event together, and really congratulate the some 200 Members of our Congress who came to Hershey with an open mind about how we can proceed in this very difficult environment where we do have disagreements, but how we can proceed in a way that continues to allow the American people to have respect for their institution.

We are going to have our disagreements, but it does not mean that we need to be disagreeable to each other.

Probably the most long-lasting part of the weekend was the opportunity for each of us to better get to know each other. I have been here 6 years, and over the last 6 years we virtually have a brandnew Congress. Some 70 percent of this Congress has been elected since 1990, and over the last several cycles we have had large classes with little opportunity to begin to understand each other.

As we understand each other better, understand where we are coming from and why we hold the beliefs that we do, I think it allows us to have better respect and more respect for the diversity of opinion that we certainly find here in Congress.

It was a great weekend, it was a good start, and there is a lot more that needs to be done, and we need to work each and every day on helping ourselves and our colleagues deal with our disagreements in a more professional way.

#### UNITED STATES MILITARY WEARING COMBAT BOOTS MADE IN CHINA

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder that millions of Chinese dollars have popped up in American politics. I mean, check it out: China alone gets \$45 billion from American taxpayers in a sweetheart deal known as most-favored-nation trade status.

Now, to me, that is absolutely disgusting, with the 17 cents an hour labor wage. But if that is not enough to rip one of those false made-in-America labels on one of those Chinese imports, check this out: The United States Air Force just issued military combat boots to our troops that were made in China. That is right. American military personnel are wearing combat boots now made in China.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. What is next, marines in Mao suits? I think it is time to take a look at what China has done and take a look at every one of these sweetheart trade deals.

I yield back the balance of all American shoe wear that has cost jobs in this country.

#### WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE AMERICA BETTER

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, last weekend my family and I joined 200-plus Members of this Chamber. We gathered together in Hershey, PA to restore trust and build friendships and, of course, to eat chocolate.

Now, obviously there were many friendships and relationships in existence before Hershey, but sometimes the reach across the aisle is very short. Sometimes we look around and we cannot recognize a Member, or we have not met them or we do not know their name.

Well, at Hershey, Republicans and Democrats came together to try to change the situation. Perhaps some of the tension that occurred in the last Congress was because we did not know each other well enough.

Now, we do know that we will not always agree; we quite often disagree. But we should work to maintain rigorous standards of respect and dignity, both on and off the floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that, working together, we can make America better.

#### LET US GET TO WORK ON BALANCING THE BUDGET

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, we need to put together a budget. Every

day Republicans force poor American families to balance their budgets or plunge into poverty. Meanwhile, as the deadline draws near for our national budget to be balanced, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle submit nothing and delay action. Real people have to balance their budgets; so should we.

Consider the human face of this debate. Hardworking people have to make painful decisions on a daily basis about keeping a roof over their family's head or putting food on their table. While you waste your time on political posturing, families I represent in Williamsburg and Brooklyn, NY, study their bank statement, trying to make ends meet. They cannot postpone their budget; neither should we.

My colleagues, everyone in this Chamber supports a balanced budget, and there are already two proposals we could be working on. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Majority Leader, Americans cannot wait any longer. Let us get working.

#### MUTUAL RESPECT IS VITAL FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

(Mr. FORBES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, replacing bitterness and a mean-spirited tack with mutual respect is vital to the effectiveness of this most democrat of institutions. Here in Congress, as we approach the challenges of this great Nation, we must renew our focus on the manner in which we do our work. It is here that the spirit of civility and bipartisanship must come alive if we are to build on the richness that is our heritage.

Every one of us has a vested interest to ensure that we as Members of Congress work together with abiding respect and uncompromising civility. Our ability to honor one another, while engaging in vigorous and thoughtful debate, goes to the heart of this institution and the people's faith in each and every one of us. Ultimately, restoring trust, dignity and comity will lead us to succeed on behalf of all of the American people. The people deserve nothing less, and they demand it.

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#### A HERSHEY'S KISS

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in thanking the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LAHOOD] and the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] for bringing us all together, over 220 Members, together for a bipartisan retreat.

In that retreat we all acknowledged we are going to have conservative, liberal, urban, rural differences for whatever philosophical reasons, but that we